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Proxmire Asks Congress To Begin Probe Into CIA

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis., Wednesday called for congressional hearings on the Central Intelligence Agency because its "potential for abuse is enormous" if it continues running uncontrolled.

In a speech prepared for delivery to the Senate Thursday, Proxmire said, "The intelligence community is the only major segment of the federal government that does not come under continuing scrutiny of Congress."

He called upon Congress to "end the footdragging and schedule hearings on the CIA."

"The CIA Oversight Committees of both houses of Congress have repeatedly postponed hearings on the CIA," Proxmire said. "Several important bills have been introduced and referred to these committees with no resulting action. Even the director of Central Intelligence, William Colby, has suggested changes in the CIA legislation but still the Oversight Committees refuse to hold hearings.

"It has reached the point where the only conclusion that can be drawn is that these committees are trying to protect the CIA from legitimate calls for change from the rest of Congress."

Proxmire said the CIA acts under orders from the President, "orders that are not always made known to Congress."

"The potential for abuse is enormous. Someday, some President could put these latent powers to his personal service or in other ways subvert the constitutional procedures we have erected for our own safety."

Proxmire recommended that "loopholes" be closed, that the full intelligence budget be made public, and major "cloak and dagger" operations overseas be presented to Congress in advance so they can be compared with foreign policy directives.